

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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R 261300Z NOV 74

FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3604

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

RUEHP

/AMCONSUL DURBAN 696

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

UNCLAS JOHANNESBURG 1267

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SF

SUBJ: CONSERVATIVES SEIZE CONTROL OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF
ALL-WHITE SOUTH AFRICAN CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR (CONFED)

REF: JOHANNESBURG 776

1. CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN CONFED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TOOK
CONTROL OF SIX-MAN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE IN ELECTIONS NOVEMBER 25
WHEN GROUP HEADED BY INCUMBENT SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT A.I. NIEUWOUDT
NARROWLY DEFEATED GROUP HEADED BY INCUMBENT PRESIDENT IVAN MARTIN
WHO WAS SEEKING REELECTION. NIEUWOUDT GROUP INCLUDED WESSEL BORNMAN
WHO REPLACED NIEUWOUDT AS SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, D.J. JACOBS WHO
RETAINED POSITION AS JUNIOR VICE PRESIDENT, JAN VAN WYK, B.J.S.
RIENECKE, & KEN DU PREEZ. NIEUWOUDT IS PRESIDENT OF ASSOCIATION OF
MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES. BORNMAN IS SECRETARY OF IRON, STEEL & ALLIED
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INDUSTRIES UNION. JACOBS IS SECRETARY OF DIE SPOORBOND (RAILWAY

UNION). VAN WYK IS SECRETARY OF COORDINATING COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS. RIENECKE IS SECRETARY OF RAILWAYS & HARBOURS POLICE STAFF ASSOCIATION. DU PREEZ IS SECRETARY OF ENGINE DRIVERS, FIREMEN & OPERATORS UNION. UNIONS WHICH NIEUWOUDT & BORNMAN REPRESENT ARE AMONG LARGEST AS WELL AS MOST CONSERVATIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA, EACH WITH WELL OVER 30,000 MEMBERS.

2. COMMENT: ELECTION REPRESENTS MAJOR SETBACK FOR LIBERAL ELEMENTS WITHIN JOHANNESBURG-BASED FEDERAL COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS STAFF ASSOCIATIONS (WHICH BACKED MARTIN FOR REELECTION) AT HANDS OF UNTRA-CONSERVATIVE PRETORIA-BASED COORDINATING COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS. (BOTH FEDERAL COUNCIL & COORDINATING COUNCIL ARE SUB-GROUPS OF UNIONS WITHIN CONFED. FEDERAL COUNCIL HAS 8 VOTES (OUT OF 24) IN CONFED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: COORDINATING COUNCIL HAS 6; NIEUWOUDT'S ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES HAS 4; FEDERATION OF MINING UNIONS HAS 2 AND REMAINING 4 VOTES ARE DIVIDED BETWEEN 4 DIFFERENT INDIVIDUAL UNIONS.) NIEUWOUDT WAS FOREMOST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CRITIC OF CONFED SECRETARY WALLY GROBLER WHEN LATTER SPEAKING IN HIS PERSONAL CAPACITY LAST JULY, PUBLICLY CALLED ON SAG TO SET UP MULTIRACIAL INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION OF INQUIRY (REFTEL). EXPECTATION IS THAT NIEUWOUDT & CO. WILL MAKE EFFORT TO SILENCE GROBLER & OTHER RELATIVELY LIBERAL PERSONALITIES AND, IN PROCESS, RUN RISK OF PRECIPITATING SPLIT IN ORGANIZATION. GUTHRIE

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